Modernizing ICCAT's eBCD System into a Single Configurable CDS System

Decision Brief for the November 2026 ICCAT 25th Special Meeting of the Commission

Prepared for: ICCAT
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Companion documents: Executive Summary and Full Report on the Feasibility Study for the Modernization of the Electronic Bluefin Catch Document System, which precede this Decision Brief



WHO WE ARE

- Headquartered in the United States, Bluefin Data serves fisheries management agencies and industry with technology and expertise.

- We build and operate neutral technology that helps collect, validate, connect, and use fisheries data—from electronic reporting and compliance workflows to traceability and system integration.

- Since 2006, we have supported millions of fisheries catch documents, including reporting for highly migratory species, bringing practical experience in reporting workflows, program administration, and data governance.

WHAT THE STUDY EXAMINED

Five questions

Technical condition of the current eBCD system

Which modernization approaches remain available

Whether BFT and candidate species share one system

The recommended architecture and migration approach

Indicative timeline, cost, and principal risks

Basis of the assessment

Direct review of source code, database schema, and architecture documentation

Input from the ICCAT Secretariat and TRAGSATEC

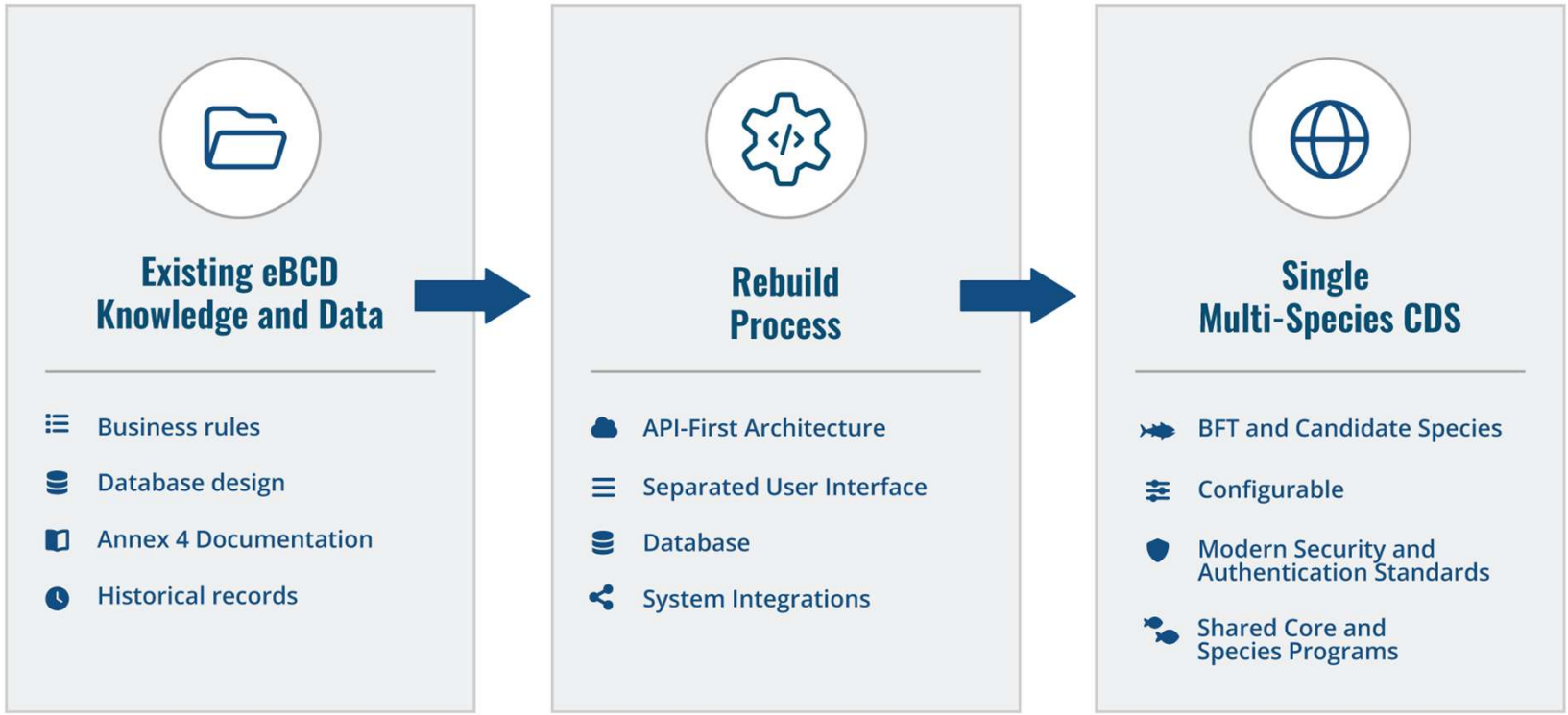
Hands-on evaluation of the eBCD test environment

CONCLUSION

☞ REBUILD THE EBCD SYSTEM AND EVOLVE IT INTO A SINGLE, CONFIGURABLE CDS SYSTEM SERVING BFT AND CANDIDATE SPECIES.

CONCLUSION

☞ THE QUESTION IS NOT WHETHER THE SYSTEM SHOULD BE MODERNIZED, BUT WHEN, HOW, AND UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS.



WHY THE REBUILD IS URGENT

~50,000

catch and re-export documents each year

More than a decade in operation

ICCAT's only electronic verification and traceability system for BFT trade.

Technology at end of life

- Core components no longer receive security updates.
- No compatible upgrade path remains.
- Operations depend on discontinued tools and specialized knowledge.



DELAY INCREASES THE RISK OF A SECURITY BREACH OR SERVICE OUTAGE

RECOMMENDED DIRECTION

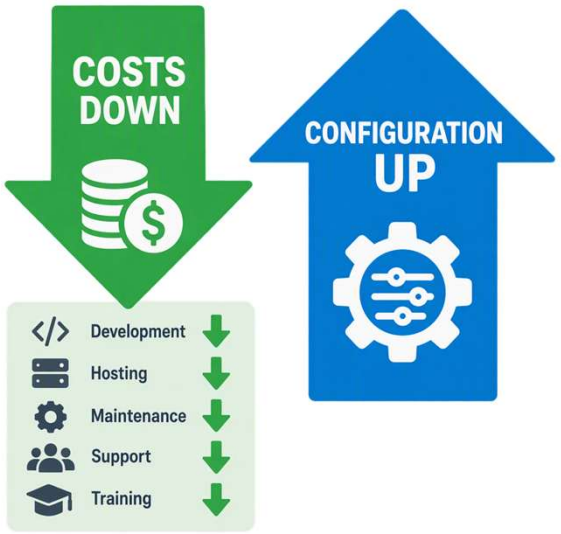
☞ One configurable CDS system

- **All current BFT functionality**

  Retain the complete eBCD workflow and supporting functions.

- **Additional species and workflows**

  Incorporate them as ICCAT decides.



☞ Configurability reduces costs and development cycles for changes, while avoiding duplicated hosting, maintenance, support, and training.

The CDS Working Group endorsed this conclusion and recommended direction in September 2026.

FULL BFT FUNCTIONALITY

The new application retains the complete BFT workflow.

Operational coverage	Requirements to preserve
Catch to trade	Catch, transfer, farming, harvesting and trade
Control and compliance	Business rules, validation checks and traceability
System services	Reporting, administration and official-language support
Records and users	Historical records, audit trails and user/account management

Scope definition includes current eBCD functions and the data and audit-trail migration requirements.



CONFIGURABLE CDS SYSTEM

Common CDS Core

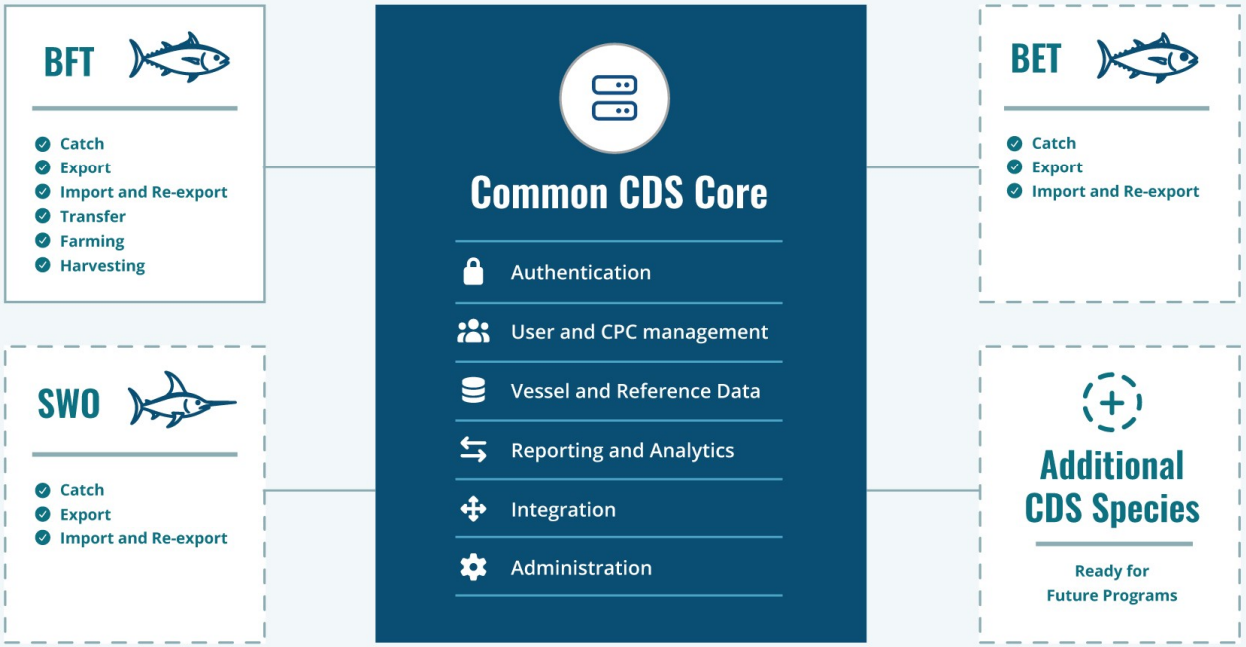
Component	Role in the single application
Browser application	Authorized data entry, validation and review for every CDS workflow
Configurable workflows	Species, document sections, fields, validation rules and user roles
Documented API	Connects the application to business rules and data services, without direct database access
Secure database	Current and historical records under ICCAT-approved data rules

Changes within the configuration model avoid a development cycle. Other requirements outside the configurable system still need software development.



Shared and Configurable Core

Modernized CDS system. Shared technical services at the core. Species programs around it.



Adding another species means adding another program around the shared core.

The platform stays the same. Grow capability, not complexity.

Species workflows share one application. ICCAT decides which species to add.

REBUILD INVESTMENT

Estimates for the recommended configurable-workflow model

Cost element	Phase I estimate
Initial investment	EUR 2.2 to 2.8 million
Annual operation and maintenance	EUR 350,000 to 550,000
Indicative duration	Approximately 24 to 35 months
Changes within the configuration model	Absorbed within annual operation and maintenance

2026 euros. Planning estimates, not procurement bids. They assume a specialist firm with fisheries or compliance experience. Final costs depend on market bids, project scope and timetable.



CONTINUITY THROUGH TRANSITION

Current eBCD system

- Keep the existing system operational.
- Limit changes to critical bug fixes or exceptional requirements.
- Avoid new functionality that would need to be replicated in the rebuild.

New CDS application

- Reproduce and test current functionality.
- Migrate historical data and users.
- Run both systems in parallel.
- Retire the current system only after ICCAT acceptance.

ICCAT retires the current system only after the new platform is proven and accepted.



PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

Align the approach and initiate the rebuild.

ICCAT will determine internal management responsibilities.

- **Confirm the approach.** One configurable CDS application with full BFT functionality.
- **Confirm scope.** Current functions, business rules and migration requirements.
- **Prepare implementation.** Configuration model, security, delivery approach and timetable.
- **Confirm funding and procurement.** Set the budget and procurement arrangements.
- **Build and transition.** Test, migrate and run in parallel before ICCAT acceptance.

